

# BMHA Newsletter

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA



Volume 5, Number 4

Oct/Nov/Dec 1994

## EDITOR'S NOTEPAD

### *Editor & XYL Drowned in Ink!*

If you're a member of Adventure Cycling (formerly BikeCentennial) you might have seen the article about my wife Jean, N0EOX, and me, N4OA, in the August issue of *Adventure Cyclist*. It makes a big splash -- five pages of color pictures and text about our cycling adventures here and abroad. The piece ends with two pages of anecdotes and information about hamming on a bicycle, with a nice plug for BMHA and where to write for more info.

That article started a flood of mail. To date we've received 103 letters, resulting in 63 requests for more information, and 40 new members. How do we know that all this action came from that one magazine piece?...the BMHA address was "keyed" as Box 4009-A.

### **New Members Welcomed**

If you'll look at page 5, you'll see that we've added 50 new members. (Since page 5 went to press, we've added 13 more new members.) More than a third of our new members are non-hams, and they all came in from that article in *Adventure Cyclist*. As you must have noted, the 1994-95 BMHA Membership List is included with this mailing. Scan the list -- you might find some NON-hams in your state who have just joined. Contact these people and help them get started in amateur radio. Show them your bike-mobile radio gear. Answer their questions. Incidentally, you'll find them to be experienced, strong cyclists.

### **Off the Cuff**

More ink. BMHA is prominently mentioned in the first edition of the newsletter of WI-QRP, a Wisconsin-based club for QRP fans. The newsletter has a good mix of easy-to-read articles. As brother-QRPer, we wish them continued success. For more info: WI-QRP, POB 111, Brandon WI 53919-0111.

Bil Paul, KD6JUI, of San Mateo, CA has been added to our editorial staff. As Assistant Editor, Bil brings us his considerable experience as a professional writer. On his "day gig" he works in public relations for the US Post Office. In his spare time he writes pieces for this newsletter (see last issue), has written a book on the Pacific Crest Bicycle Trail, leads tours on that border-to-order Trail, and whether on or off the bike is addicted to QRP operation.

### **New Ham/Bike BBS's**

From Steve Roberts, N4RVE, of Behemoth and Microship fame:  
Point Mosaic @ <http://microship.ucsd.edu>  
Wordy@ucsd.edu

From Tony Stalls, K4KYO, Arlington VA:  
The Freewheel Computer Bulletin Board, on Internet --  
[rstalls@access.digex.com](mailto:rstalls@access.digex.com)

From Joe Hoepfner, N0PHL, Sysop, Norman OK:  
HamCycle BBS at 405-447-6712 -- files on radio and cycling.  
Sorry, the above info came in at last minute. Details in next issue.

### **Treasury Report** Fiscal year, July 1, 1993 to June 30, 1994.

Beginning bank balance:	1,889.48	
Monies received:	2,859.25	
Total:		4,748.73
Expenses:		
Printing and Xerox:	724.06	
Postage:	695.52	
Office supplies & expenses:	169.83	
Miscellaneous:	112.70	
Total Expenses:		1,702.11
Bank balance on hand, June 30, 1994:		\$3,046.62

### **Volunteers Needed!**

Need people with ideas and energy -- to help plan and organize BMHA Get-together Days on state and/or regional level; one-day show-and-tell swap info meets. Send ideas, etc. to Editor, BMHA, Box 4009, Boulder CO 80306

---Hartley Alley, N4OA, Editor

## COMMENTS

....Read article in *Adventure Cyclist*. Bought 2-m radio and am studying for exam to be taken next month. I bike in remote areas (few houses, etc.) bike breakdown or accident communication has been a concern. We also sail, canoe, camp, etc. Your idea seems like a good answer. Membership check enclosed. I'm curious about antennas.

---Connie Fletcher, Menominee, WI

....I mount my old callsign car license plates on my bicycle.

---Kenneth E Nollert, KOEN, Rochester, MN

(cont. on page 3)

# TRAVEL & ADVENTURE

## *Biking/Hamming in England*

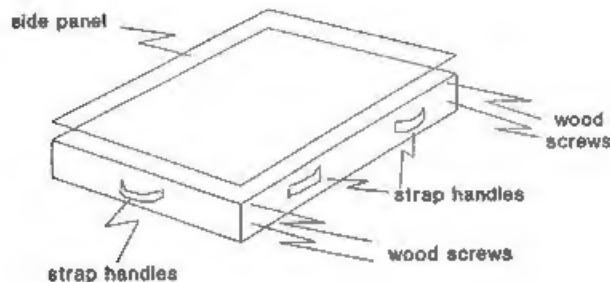
In June of 1993, I had an assignment to work in the United Kingdom for most of the month, so it seemed appealing to take along two of my favorite hobbies: the ham station and the bicycle. I was not able to locate any literature that addressed both aspects of bicycle mobile hamming in the UK. Perhaps these comments will help others carrying such equipment overseas and will induce them to write about their experiences.

### **Boxing the Bicycle**

While I have two bikes (a mountain bike and a road bike), I knew very little about the type of terrain I would be facing. I decided to take the mountain bike because it could be used in a larger variety of terrains.

The airlines generally provided cardboard boxes for bicycle transportation, but the boxes did not appear to provide much protection for the bike and could not be used to move the bike around the country once I arrived there. Instead, I chose to construct a wooden box which would match the airline dimensions for luggage.

The box itself was constructed with 1" by 10" lumber, held together with wood screws to make a frame — 54" long, 32 1/2" high, and 9 3/8" wide. The sides were cut from very thin but rigid paneling and screwed to the frame. This resulted in a box that weighed about 25 pounds. With the bike weight of 27 lbs, throwing in the helmet and tools brought the total weight to 55 lbs — well under the 70-lb airline limit for checked luggage.



*Ben's Bicycle Box*

The airlines told me that I would have to open the box for inspection so I kept a screwdriver in my carry-on luggage for that purpose. While no one asked me to open the box, it was apparent on my arrival at Heathrow Airport in London that someone had partially ripped the sides off the box; undoubtedly the customs agents wanting to know what was inside. While I don't blame them for conducting the inspection, I would have liked to have had the opportunity to open the box myself. In the future, I will somehow secure at least one side of the box with some kind of Velcro straps; something that adds little weight and doesn't protrude from the side of the box.

As for transportation itself, American Airlines told me that for international flights I could carry on two pieces of luggage and check one or carry on one and check two. When they gave me the weight and dimension limits of the checked luggage, the box fell under the limits. Therefore, I was not charged the usual \$100 fee for shipping a bike. When I got to the check-in counter in Nashville, the ticket agent at first tried to

charge me the \$100, but I relayed the previous information I had been given. After some checking with his computer data base, he agreed that there would be no additional charge for this piece of luggage.

Several other important points should be made concerning the bike box. Bicycles are permitted on trains in the UK except during the early morning and late afternoon rush hours. They aren't permitted at all on the subways. However, people bring all sorts of luggage and gear on the subways. Some of the packs with sleeping bags were the same size as my bike box. Since the box did not look like a bike, I had no trouble getting the box on the subways. However, I would recommend not moving anything this cumbersome via the subways during rush hours. A better plan for moving the bike during rush hours is to take a taxi. London is heavily populated with big-size black taxis, and the bike box just fit crossways in the back seat of the cab.

One discovery I made while leaving London was that at Heathrow Airport, Terminal 3 has a facility known as Left Luggage (Ph 011-44-81-745-4599 from the U.S.). This is a perfect place for short-term storage of luggage, at a reasonable fee of about \$5.00 a day for each piece of luggage.

I learned that the UK offers excellent group rides on most of the weekends during the summer months. These rides are sponsored by the British Heart Foundation and the British Cancer Research Institute. Having now been on several, I can heartily recommend these rides. They are very well organized and have excellent support facilities. From the U.S., information on these rides can be obtained by calling Bike Rides at 011-44-403-210406 and Bike Events at 011-44-225-310-859.

### **Ham Equipment and License**

Amateur equipment for the bike rides consisted of a Standard C 558, dual-band handi-talkie for 2 meters and 440. The AARL was able to supply the necessary forms for a reciprocal license. I also took along a small, single-band transceivers for both 10 meters and 6 meters. In order to get the 10 meter rig in the country, I had to supply additional information (a copy of the instruction manual) and promise not to leave the equipment in the UK or attempt to convert it to 11 meters. None of this presented a problem for me!

(Editor's note: A reciprocal UK license is available to the General and above license classes. It is unfortunately not available to the Novice or Technician classes.)

### **Fun Rides**

After spending about a week in London, I moved to the small town of Aylesbury, some 60 miles N.E. of London. Here, the hotel was just a short block from the train station. I was looking forward to the weekend group rides sponsored by the British Heart Foundation and the British Cancer Research Institute. For all the bad things you normally hear about the British weather, I must say that the month of June 1993 was excellent for me. Only a couple of days did we have any rain, and most daily temperatures ranged between 70 and 80 deg. F. With the blue skies and gentle breezes, I could not have asked for better biking weather.

In addition to my solo rides around Aylesbury, I managed to go on two of the group rides — one from Birmingham to Oxford and another from London to Brighton. For the first ride, about 70 miles, I had to drive my rental car to

Birmingham for the start of the ride. For a reasonable fee, transportation was provided back to Birmingham at the end of the day. This ride took me through many small villages with cafes and pubs, some in buildings as much as 1,000 years old. Much of the ride was on roads closed off to motor traffic.

The second ride, a 60-miler from London to the seaside town of Brighton, was advertised as the largest group ride in the world. The next day, I read in the paper that there were 32,000 riders on the ride! Again, much of the route was closed to motor traffic. The ride itself was through beautiful countryside and villages. As in the first ride, many villages had drinks, snacks, and local bands or other entertainment to make the ride more enjoyable.

Near the end of the trek, there was one steep hill to grind up — I would estimate a 1500 to 2000-foot climb. It was a bit amusing that this mountain was called "The Downs", because it all seemed up to me! Once on top, there were several miles of beautiful green fields with trees in the background. Also adding to the color were large fields of rape, a brilliant yellow flower which blended well with the green grass and trees. Once this plateau was traversed, the route then descended down to sea level into Brighton.

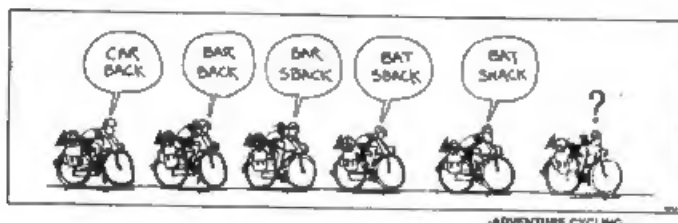
### Amateur Radio Operation

Sad to say, I was not able to operate the handi-talkie while in motion on the bike. This was because most (maybe all!) of the repeaters in England utilize a 1750 Hz tone burst at the beginning of each transmission. My handi-talkie has provisions for generating a tone, but on my rig this is accomplished by keying the push-to-talk with one hand while pressing a keyboard button with the other hand. When I'm riding the bike and operating, I normally use an external push-to-talk button held to the handle bars with a Velcro pump strap. With the handi-talkie in its pouch, which is fastened to the handle bars, I couldn't easily reach down to press the keyboard button for generating the 1750 Hz tone. The end result was not being able to operate while in motion. In order to successfully operate while in motion the operator must solve the tone burst problem.

In retrospect, I was really glad I took along the bike and the ham gear and met the obstacles in achieving my goal of enjoying my two hobbies. The rides and the weather made the effort well worth it, and I really had an enjoyable experience. To sum it up, sometimes you just have to go for the gusto!

My work project is scheduled to continue late this fall in France. Given the opportunity, I may have the chance to repeat all of last summer's adventure in a foreign language: French. While I'm not yet exactly fluent, I'm feverishly studying....just in case!

—Ben Lowe, K4QF/ZF2BL  
848 Co. Rd #138  
Scottsboro, AL 35768



## MORE COMMENTS

....We plan to bike from Spokane east, ending the first leg in Vermont before winter. I plan to take my 2-meter handie-talkie. In the past, I took it up Mt McKinley; when I was at 17,000 ft., got a ham in Anchorage to call my folks and tell them we'd made it.

—Diane Osborn, N0ETL, Spokane, WA

....Read the article in *Adventure Cyclist*. I like to bicycle tour, and the addition of ham radio was intriguing. So last Saturday I bought the "no-code" exam book suggested in the article. Yesterday I passed exams 2 and 3A and now I am waiting for my Technician license to come in the mail.

—Donald Cundy, Old Lyme, CT

....As you know I have just obtained my license, and therefore have been busy obtaining and setting up gear. I have recently switched jobs. I found the new job opening during a long bike trip when dropping in on an old friend. He told me he had an offer for me and was serious about it. When I pulled out my resume from the saddlebag he realized I too was serious!

—Teddy Neeman, 4Z7BAB, Tel Aviv, Israel

....Greetings from Warsaw, Poland! I have just begun a three-year assignment here with the Dept. of State. Cycling is very popular in Poland and bicycle mobile QSOs are quite reliable through the SR5W 2-meter repeater in downtown Warsaw. My next project is to install an MFI-9020 on my Schwinn Crisscross and give 20-meter CW a try. Best regards to all and I'll try to check into the BMHA Net when conditions permit.

—Thomas J. Warren, SO5TW, K3TW  
(Formerly: VU2TJW, 5H3TW, J20TW, D68TW)  
UNIT 1340, AMERICAN EMBASSY WARSAW

....Sorry to be late about writing, but at least I have a weak excuse — I was in Wyoming as an official bike-riding ham on the RAW, the Ride Around Wyoming. It was great having so many hams involved in a big cycling event. BMHA'er Bob Faurot, N7WYO, was the chief organizer, assisted by four bike-riding hams, eight support hams, and six bike-riding medics. I just finished riding Bike Virginia, and with 12 members of our bike club I'll soon be cycling from NJ to MD for GEAR. I use a Yaesu FT-11R and a AEA Hot Rod telescoping antenna which fits neatly in a pocket of my handlebar bag. With the Yaesu earpiece/in-line miniature microphone I operate mobile.

—Buck Fountain, W4TIV, Califon, NJ

....Great idea for an organization! My husband, nephew and I never go cycling without radios. When we went on the Lewis and Clark tour with Adventure Cycling this summer, we were able to use our HTs to keep in touch on the trail. Even though I was usually the last in line, I never abandoned hope as long as I could talk with the others on my HT.

—Kathy Wimble, KE6FZC, SUNNYVALE, CA

....[As the Director of Ham Communication on RAGBRAI] here are some of my observations: \*\*External antennas on bikes seem to give at least five times the distance over a rubber duck. \*\*Hams played a big role in traffic control at the scene of accidents. RAGBRAI officials thought this was a big help. It kept the flow of riders going and enabled the ambulances faster access to the scene. Hams are the Great Communicators! \*\*After riding 100 miles it doesn't matter if you're sleeping on cow pies.

—Chris Charron, WB0RSW, Maxwell, IA

# ANTENNAS

## Mounting an Antenna on a Rear Rack

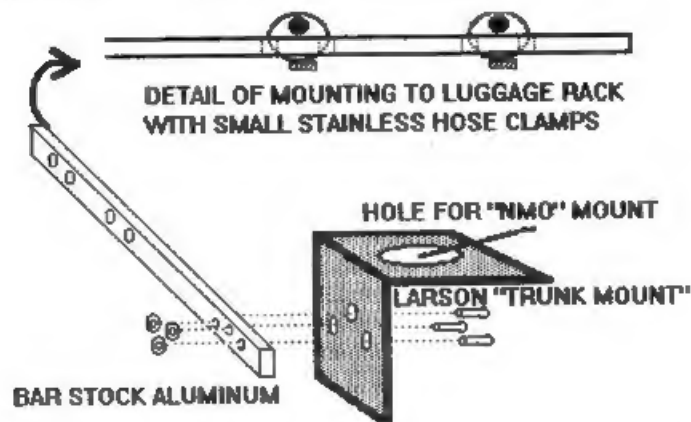
I've been operating bike mobile for a couple of years now. After much initial experimenting with various antennas and methods of attaching the antenna to my bike, I've found something that works for me. I'd like to share it with the group. It may not work for you (everyone has his or her own preferences).

I'm constantly amazed at the amount of hams who hear the words "mobile antenna" and automatically think that it must have a ground plane, or radials. This is especially true when the antenna is a "mag-mount". I run my dual-band HT on the bike with an excellent signal and NO GROUND RADIALS! How? By using my trusty LARSON 2/70 dual-band antenna that usually sits on its mag mount on the roof of my car.

Most (not all, but most) dual-band antennas are ground-independent. They need no radials. (To verify this notion check the DIAMOND mobile antenna listing in the HRO catalog, and you will see a notation that approximately 75% to 80% of the list is ground-independent.) My LARSON evidently is similarly blessed. When I first started using it on the bike I strapped the magnet base down to the luggage rack with bungee cords, since my rack is aluminum and thus not "magnetable". But finally I settled on the following mounting scheme that has worked perfectly for the last two years.

### Parts List:

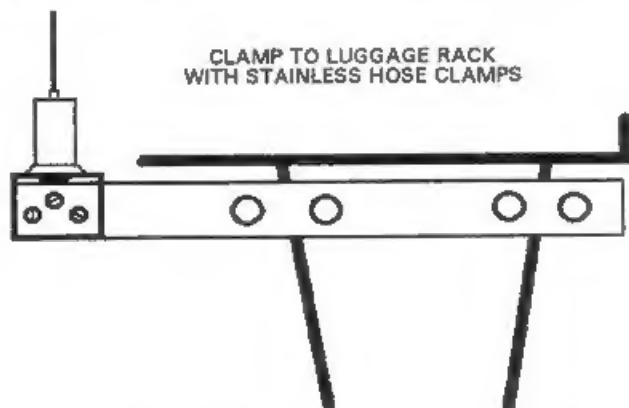
You'll need a LARSON L-shaped trunkmount bracket, an "NMO" mount with coax, a two-to-three-foot long piece of bar stock aluminum, and a pair of "real small" stainless steel hose clamps. The bar stock may be the hardest to acquire, but I was able to find it in one of those giant chain hardware stores. Any steel bar might do, but then it would be harder to drill and you will have to deal with the rust problem.



Cut the bar to the proper length to fit your particular brand of luggage rack -- see drawing -- and drill holes of the appropriate diameter in the proper locations. The small holes go at the end to mount the trunk bracket and the larger holes (large enough to pass the hose clamps) are spaced to match the vertical support posts of your luggage rack.

Assemble as shown in the diagram. Be sure to seal the underside of the NMO mount with "COAX SEAL" or something similar, and if you intend to swap your antenna back

and forth get a rain cap to seal the unused mount from the elements. Even if you only operate on one band, it might be worth it to get a dual-band antenna so as to avoid the hassles of ground plane problems (or if you would rather not build a J-Pole). This makes a neat, compact antenna mount -- and I have no trouble attaching my saddlebags to the side of the luggage rack that holds the antenna mount.



*The finished product in place on the rear rack.*

### My Setup:

I prefer not to mount the HT on the bike because of vibration (even in a padded bag) and carry it on a belt worn just for that purpose. I use an ICOM 24AT for a rig and the headset operating on LATCHING PTT (push-ON / push-OFF). I clip the PTT button on my person and while admittedly not as convenient (or safe) as a handlebar-mounted switch, it works for me. (Frankly, I'd rather not cut into the wires of the headset that cost me \$60!)

---Richard G. Amirault, N1JDU  
P.O. Box 469  
Malden, MA 02148

## BMHA NET....ON 20

### Fall & Winter Busy Time on the Net

As you might expect, it's been a little slow on BMHA HF Net this summer. I have been out of town on a number of Sundays and haven't been able to call the net. This should change as the fall and winter months set in.

TIME: 2000 UTC and four hours later at 0000 UTC.

DATE: 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.

FREQ: 14.253 -- plus or minus the QRM.

Look for me, NF0N, at those times and if I'm unable to call the net please look for those who have picked up the net when I've been out of town. In particular, look for Assistant Net Controls Jim Kortge, NU8N, and John Liebenrood, K7RO. Jim covers the East, John covers the West, and I cover the middle.

Keep on those pedals as long as you can, as long as the season allows. See if you can beat my miles for this year. You'll have to put on over 5,000 miles to do it!

---Mike Nickolaus, NF0N, BMHA Net Control  
316 E. 32nd St.  
S. Sioux City, NE 68776



# NEW MEMBERS

*We're pleased to add these names to our Membership List:*

Lewis 'Jack' Anderson, 826 Troy Wood, Troy MI 48083  
 Peter Apper, KB7TGF, 16731 Seminole Rd NE, Poulsbo WA 98370  
 Neil Beckwith, 1225 South 26, South Bend IN 46615  
 Alan S Berman, W9APV, 340 Redwing, Highland Park IL 60015  
 John Blair, KA5LKG, POB 5164, Swan Lake MT 59911  
 David G Bodnar, N3ENM, 26 Ralston Pl, Pittsburgh PA 15216  
 Randy Bogle, KD6RYM, 710 W Glenoaks Blvd, Glendale CA 91202  
 Paul Bradshaw, WB1ABV, Box 166 Candlewood Isle, New Fairfield CT 06812  
 Robert D Britt, 4504 Chestnut Rd, Signal Mountain TN 37377  
 Darlene Brokaw, 940 Oriole Dr, Laguna Beach CA 92651  
 Jan Chromick, W8MBL, 464 W Stroop Rd, Kettering OH 45429  
 Joe Cline, KC7AXG, 1950 Carlin St, Reno NV 89503  
 Ralph G Davis, KI6YP, 831 Valle Vista Av, Vallejo CA 94590

Tom Edstrom, 6209 N Campbell Av, Chicago IL 60659  
 J F Gentry, N3SNE, Glen Burnie, Maryland 21060  
 Kenneth S Gould, 2013 Topf Rd, North Little Rock AR 72216  
 Glenn Hickey, W5VYO, 1707 Tarrytown Rd, Little Rock AR 72207  
 Charles Kaiden, 15 Nadine Rd, Framingham MA 01701  
 Wilfred S Kearse Jr, pending, 11602 Barrow, San Antonio TX 78253  
 Norman Lafritz, KD6CKP, 26322 Grayslake Rd, Palos Verdes Pk CA 90275  
 Marty Lougee, 138 Ashland Av, Medford OR 97504  
 Jeanne W Lusc, N9EYA, 5282 Shattuck Rd, Belvidere IL 61008  
 Ron Lusc, KD9KX, POB 545, Cedar Rapids IA 52406  
 John & RuthAnne Mallory, 2230 Prairie #5C, Emporia KS 66801  
 Billie Mikkelsen, POB 293, Laguna Beach CA 92652

Elwynn J Miller, 13 Sheep Pasture Way, POB 1077, E. Sandwich MA 02537  
 M.J. Moore, c/o TRW/BMD, POB 1310, SB-3/210, San Bernardino CA 93402  
 Tom Nascarella, K2OW, 152 Alexander Av, Nutley NJ 07110  
 Stan Nelson, KD0G, 2012 W. 49th Terrace, Shawnee Mission KS 66205  
 Ken Nowinski, N2XKQ, POB 511, Deer Park NY 11729  
 Alan S Okazaki, KE6LRG, 577 36th St, Manhattan Beach CA 90266  
 Bob Oldham, KD4GAD, Route 1, Box 340F, Dorwell VA 23047  
 Rodli J Pederson, 120 14th St NW, Valley City ND 58072  
 Dan Schaller, N3RHW, 644 East Fort Av, Baltimore MD 21230  
 Muriel C Schuerman, 10927 Hasty, Downey CA 90241  
 Azor Shirley, Jr., AB5ND, 995 Mahlon St, De Ridder LA 70634  
 Garry Song, 7402 Orangethorpe Av, Buena Park CA 90621

Jim & Penny Speck, 3117 N.W. 62nd, Oklahoma City OK 73112  
 R.A. Tony Stalls, K4KYO, 917 North Lexington St, Arlington VA 22205  
 Stephen Tannenbaum, N6RUO, 3214 Fernwood Av, Los Angeles CA 90039  
 David Ulrich, N2WWP, c/o Royal Glass, 500 Nordhoff Pl, Englewood NJ 07631  
 George Uveges, KB6AYU, 2401-B Oak St, Santa Monica CA 90405  
 Wallace E Van Ness, WA4ADM, 14313 Spring Gate Ct, Midlothian VA 23112  
 Robert W Walstrom, W0EJ, 7431 Mason Dr, Cedar Rapids IA 52411  
 Roger Wilcox, W8OZY, 5377 Chestnut Hill, Willoughby OH 44094  
 Dan Witulski, WB0ORU, 1222 Elk St, Beatrice NE 68310  
 Jim Worham, KC6FEQ, 1468 Oakhorne Dr, Harbor City CA 90710  
 Joseph A Wozniak, 7 Sycamore St, Hudson NH 03051  
 Ray Wyatt, 8402 Braesview, Houston TX 77071

*With traditional ham friendliness, make contact with these new members, welcome them to BMHA, and help them with any problems they might have.*

## BMHA NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: Hartley Alley, NA0A  
 ASSOCIATE EDITOR: ASSISTANT EDITOR:  
 Skip LaFetra, AA6WK Bil Paul, KD6JUI

BOARD OF ADVISORS:  
 Russell Dwarshuis, KB8U Len Koppl, KD0RC  
 Mike Nickolaus, NF0N Bob Pulhuj, KE8ZJ  
 Chairman and Founder: Hartley Alley, NA0A

Permission given to reproduce any of the material in this issue, provided the author is credited and the source is acknowledged as "from the Newsletter of the Bicycle Mobile Hams of America." Please send clip to address below.

We welcome articles, suggestions, letters, announcements, photos, artwork --- anything pertaining to bicycling while operating an amateur radio, or vice versa.

Submitted material will be edited for clarity and, if necessary, shortened to fit space constraints. Material should be submitted before Mar 1, June 1, Sept 1, or Dec 1 for inclusion in the ensuing issue.

BMHA NEWSLETTER is the quarterly publication of the Bicycle Mobile Hams of America — Jan, Apr, July, Oct.

TELEPHONE: 303-494-6559  
 BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA (BMHA)  
 Box 4009, Boulder, CO 80306

## ABOUT BMHA

### *For the information of our first-time readers*

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America got its start when a "Stray" in the June '89 QST magazine asked to "get in touch with hams who operate their radios while bicycle-mobile, or while in any other human-powered conveyance", signed by Hartley Alley, NA0A. Twenty five hams responded, filled out questionnaires, and received a summary of the collected data.

In April of '90 we had our first BMHA Forum at the Dayton HamVention. We played to a packed house, overflowed the room, and added 54 names to our mailing list. Our four subsequent forums have drawn increasingly larger audiences, and now BMHA is established as a "regular" at this world-renowned event.

This is the seventeenth issue of our quarterly newsletter, which has become the clearing house for the exchange of info and ideas for the hams who go on the air from their bicycles. Since the last issue of this newsletter we have added 50 new members. The total membership now stands at 394, with members in 42 states, and six countries.

BMHA membership puts you in touch with a friendly and helpful group of bike-riding hams. You'll make contacts through our membership directory, packet address list, bi-weekly net on 20 meters, annual meeting and Forum at the Dayton HamVention and other regional meetings, and of course through the BMHA NewsLetter, which has articles on bike trips, antennas, other gear, operating tips, etc. Membership application blank on the next to last page.

# PROFILE

## *Skip La Fetra, AA6WK*

1614 Peacock Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

**Age, etc:** 38, married, two children

**Occupation:** Engineering Manager for a large computer company — Hewlett Packard. Licensed professional engineer since 1979. BSEE and MSEE, both from Stanford University.

**Been a ham:** 3 years, extra class license

**Been biking:** 21 years

**Most miles ridden in a day:** 207. Has twice ridden the Double Century, both times with his 60-year-old father.

**Bicycle:** Gitane "Tour De France", bought in 1973

**Ham gear on bike:** Kenwood dual-band HT, home-made antenna and mounting bracket, intra-aural in-the-car microphone

**Ham Clubs:** BMHA, Sunnyvale Amateur Radio Emergency Service, Silicon Valley Emergency Communication System, past newsletter editor for the Las Cumbres ARC — K6FB repeater, San Francisco Bay Area.



*Skip and his '73 Gitane, ready for a ride.*

Skip first ran into the BMHA through a "stray" in QST shortly after acquiring his first HF rig (which was about six months after getting his ham license). Ever since his first BMHA net in January of '91, he has been a BMHA member. Skip is the Associate Editor of the BMHA newsletter and has written several articles describing his bicycle mobile equipment and set-up.

**Quotes:** "I see bicycling and amateur radio as complementary hobbies, with that in mind I've kept my mobile radio gear small

and simple so that it does not detract from the enjoyment of riding. An HT in a custom handlebar mount, an antenna up in front so it doesn't get in the way, lots of batteries, and I'm on my way! I've experimented with several setups; I've gone bicycle mobile with a speaker-mike, a headset and an in-the-car microphone. I prefer the in-the-car model because there's less hassle with helmet straps."

Skip's claim to bicycle-mobile distinction is having operated packet radio from the bike — although never while actually in motion, but he claims that "there's always a first time." He plans to set his TNC's mailbox to beaconing, and read any mail later — as he doesn't feel too skilled with keyboard use while pedaling.

Skip is the only ham in his family, although his 6-year old daughter is showing some interest and delights in teaching her friends Morse code. Alas, she shows little interest in bicycling, and hardly rides the bike Daddy so proudly bought her last year.

**Skip's main wish:** more time. "There just aren't enough hours in a day (or days in a week) for cycling, radio work, holding down a steady job, and raising a family."

---Hartley Alley, NA0A, editor

---

## BITS & PIECES

### *Explaining Ham Radio To The Non-Hams*

When a member of the general public asks you about amateur radio, never say you just talk!

When I was a brand-new ham and people asked, "What do you do with your radio?" I would start by saying, "Well, hams just talk . . . you know . . . converse." The usual response was, "Uh, huh." Then I would say, "It's really fun to find out about who you are talking with." A similar response, "Oh, uh-huh," often resulted. Giving examples, I would say, "I talk with other amateurs about commuting into New York City, or driving a taxi in New Orleans, or retirement living in a motor home." The next response was, "Just talking?" "Sure," I would say, "It's always a bit of an adventure to find out about a stranger." "You mean you don't know these people?" they would ask incredulously.

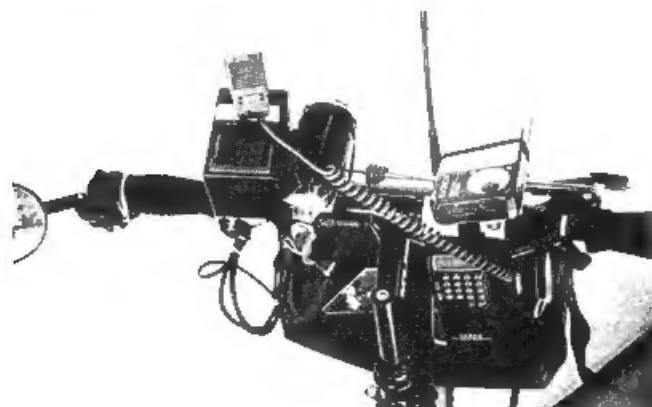
This is tough sledding, if you know what I mean. Now I just say, "Ham radio is my bicycle's Cellular Telephone." I explain that bicycling is my hobby and that I wanted a hobby cellular telephone to use while riding. Though few understand ham radio, nearly everyone understands cellular telephones. People think it is "the ultimate in cool" to have one on the bicycle. Those who still do not believe get a little demonstration of the 2-meter phone patch — they instantly become believers.

---Bryan Lundgren, N8MHZ  
714 Michigan Avenue  
South Haven, MI 49090

# MY SETUP

## Bike-Mobiling in Israel

As a veteran biker but novice ham I must say that ham radio has enhanced my biking enjoyment far more than I had ever expected. I take my VHF/UHF HT on every journey, changing solo trips into social events. The HT lets you cycle at your own pace without being alone. Also I don't need to plan tour details in advance; I am free to change plans along the route, and can "ride with the wind" (literally). The local Tel-Aviv amateur radio club has plenty of relays around the country, making communications easy.



Handlebar gear from left to right: mirror, fixed horn button, large speaker, speaker-mike (when not in use attached with velcro to large speaker), electric horn, electric fan (great during slow climbing in Israel's hot summer), HT (I ride now with a Yaesu FT-530), FM/AM radio. Handlebar bag carries night gear: belt flasher, forehead-mounted flashlight, thermal waterbottle, tools, etc.

**Details of gear and general principles:** All equipment described (except RF cable and horn button) is modular and detachable in seconds, allowing me to strip the bike

bare and lock it on the street. All equipment is additionally secured with a safety wire or other method as a safety precaution. HT must not be rigidly mounted to frame, as vibration will ruin it in time. I also recommend low air pressure in the front tire. All controls are around handlebar and easily accessible. HT panel is clearly visible.

Some problems encountered: Highway noise drowns reception making speech unintelligible. I do not want to use earphones or a headset as I consider this to be hazardous. The solution was a bigger loudspeaker.

**Transmission is by hand-holding** an external speaker-mike. It's not connected to the speaker output. Large external speaker is connected instead in order to be able to hear HT over traffic noise. FM/AM radio doubles as a power amplifier by connections to inner circuits. HT can power speaker directly but I usually prefer to route it through radio. FM antenna is grounded to frame, giving good reception without extending the hazardous antenna. HT is hung by the belt clip to an elastic luggage strap stretched along the handlebar. For the HT I use either the rubber duck or a Diamond NR-770H double band antenna mounted on the rear carrier.

Unexpectedly, and unfortunately, my setup has been accident-tested and, happily, has proven to be accident-proof. Don't worry — I managed (barely) to flee in time and personally was not hit. My Icom 24AT was on the bike but sustained no damage. The bike's rear part was crumpled -- my new bike! Lesson learned: If a motorist stops beside you to ask directions, DO NOT assist him if he stops the car in the middle of the lane, blocking the highway. Another car might not see him in time, hit the brakes, lose control, and head straight to the roadside where you are standing with your bike. Luckily, I had been teaching my daughter that when you're in that dangerous situation, DROP the bike and run. So I did just that.

—Teddy Neeman, 4Z7BAB  
POB 65078  
Tel-Aviv 61650, ISRAEL

## Membership Application

MemAPPL3.eps 5 15 83 /100 /dlac /pc /newmem /pac /kaps /news /Q's /roct /walc /serv  
**BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA** date \_\_\_\_\_  
Box 4009, Boulder, CO 80306

Individual \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ new member? \_\_\_\_\_ renewal? \_\_\_\_\_  
(US or Canada)

Family \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ Foreign \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(limit: two persons)

Make check payable to BMHA, in US dollars or international money order.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Call \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ License Class \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Most miles bicycled in one day \_\_\_\_\_

## BMHA's Official Logo

The next time you need to order new QSL cards, don't forget to include the BMHA logo in your design. Here's the official logo, as designed by Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U.

BICYCLE MOBILE



HAMS OF AMERICA

BICYCLE MOBILE



HAMS OF AMERICA

# LETTERS

## *In Favor of Headphones*

Editor:

Articles on bicycle mobile antennas and motorcycle mobile operating in past issues of QST advise against the use of headphones, especially if they cover both ears, and point out that laws in several states prohibit them while driving or bicycling.

But the wisdom of headphone prohibitions, as with antenna restrictions, is open to question. Sealed headphones block outside sounds, but small foam-pad "open-air" headphones do not, to any meaningful degree. While hearing does provide a safety advantage, traffic law requires a vehicle operator to respond only to the sound of a horn or siren, which is audible over reasonable headphone or loudspeaker volume and engine noise. There is no hearing test for a driver's license, and no law against driving in a car with a kilowatt sound system and closed windows, or walking across busy streets wearing headphones! The inconsistencies reflect legislative action without rational basis, and a pattern of discrimination.

Impairment of hearing with small foam-pad headphones depends on the operator's judgment as to when and how loud to play them, just as with a loudspeaker — but with these advantages:

- 1) With binaural headphones, the auditory image is localized inside the wearer's head — intelligible at lower volume and less likely to be confused with outside sounds. That's why DXers use headphones....
- 2) Low acoustic feedback lets riders pass close to one another while communicating, and facilitates full duplex voice operation.
- 3) Other users of public roads and trails are spared noise pollution.
- 4) Power drain and weight are reduced — important on a bicycle.

## **BMHA NEWSLETTER**

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America  
PO Box 4009  
Boulder, CO 80306

*Address Correction Requested*

**First Class Mail**

As an engineer who studied acoustics, I can vouch for my scientific accuracy. As a consultant in bicycle accident cases, I have testified in an injury lawsuit which my side lost because of the headphone issue — the motorist who struck the bicyclist was clearly at fault. For a longer discussion, readers may wish to obtain my article on the headphone issue published in *Bicycle USA*, the magazine of the League of American Bicyclists [formerly the League of American Wheelmen] the national bicyclist's organization, older but with great similarities to the ARRL in its advocacy role, its structure, and its outdated name! For copies, you may contact the LAB at (410) 539-3399.

Very truly yours,

—John S. Allen, AA1EP  
7 University Park  
Walham, MA 02154

---

## FOR SALE

*Do you have bicycle-mobile-related radio equipment for sale? Send in a description and we'll run it. Limit of 20 words, plus your name, address, phone. For members only.*

---

## **Back Issues Still Available**

You may purchase any of the sixteen back issues of the BMHA NewsLetter for \$1.75 each, postpaid. For info on the contents of the various issues send a business-size SASE to: BMHA, POB 4009, Boulder CO 80306, and ask for the Index of Back Issues. This service available to members only.



ADVENTURE CYCLING